

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 IO-14 ISO-00 SSM-05 H-02 L-03
INR-07 PA-02 PRS-01 SS-15 SP-02 PM-05 ACDA-10
MC-02 TRSE-00 MCT-01 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 /102 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/P:REUNDELAND:RGH
APPROVED BY NEA/P:REUNDELAND
S/PRS - MR. CARTER (INFO)
H - MR. FLATEN (INFO)
SSM - MR. MC ANDREW
NEA - MR. COLLUMS
NEA/ARN - MR. DRAPER
NEA/IAI - MR. SMITH
NEA/EGY - MR. NEWBERRY

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O 172331Z AUG 77 ZFF4
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV NIACT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY SANA
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
USMISSION SINAI
AMCONSUL DHAHRAN
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
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AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
USMISSION NATO
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
USCINCEUR
CIA
NSA
DOD
USIA

UNCLAS STATE 195931

CINCEUR FOR POLAD - TEL AVIV ACKNOWLEDGE ONLY

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING - AUGUST 17

1.
FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS
FROM DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING FOR AUGUST 17, 1977. FYI
ONLY, SPOKESMAN TODAY WAS HODDING CARTER III.

Q. DO YOU HAVE A REACTION TO THE LATEST ISRAELI ACTION
IN AUTHORIZING NEW SETTLEMENTS ON THE WEST BANK?
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A. WELL, THERE ARE TWO POINTS TO BE MADE HERE: FIRST, WE
HAVE SEEN IT, AND WE ARE NOW IN CONVERSATION, OR WILL SOON
BE WITH THEM ABOUT THIS ANNOUNCEMENT. THAT WILL BE IN
ISRAEL AT THE AMBASSADORIAL LEVEL, AND THE SECOND THING,
JUST TO RESTATE THE OBVIOUS, OUR POSITION ON THE WEST BANK
AND SETTLEMENTS ON THE WEST BANK IS UNCHANGED FROM WHAT IT
HAS BEEN, FROM THIS PODIUM AND FROM THE PRESIDENT AND
THE SECRETARY OF STATE ON NUMEROUS OCCASIONS, AND I DON'T
THINK I REALLY HAVE TO RUN THROUGH IT AGAIN. I COULD REFER
YOU TO A LOT OF TEXTS ON THAT SUBJECT.

Q. WELL, WHAT IS DIFFERENT IS THAT THE PRESIDENT SPECIFIC-
ALLY ASKED PRIME MINISTER BEGIN NOT TO AUTHORIZE NEW
SETTLEMENTS UNTIL THERE WAS A GENEVA PEACE CONFERENCE, AND

NOW THE GOVERNMENT HAS AUTHORIZED THEM, IT SEEMS ALMOST
LIKE A DELIBERATE PROVOCATION. WOULD YOU INTERPRET IT
THAT WAY?

A. I'M REALLY NOT PREPARED TO INTERPRET ANYTHING RIGHT
NOW. WE ARE GOING TO BE TALKING TO THE ISRAELIS TODAY, AND
I MAY HAVE SOMETHING MORE FOR YOU AFTER THOSE CONVERSATIONS
ARE RELAYED BACK TO US.

Q. IN THE NATURE OF CLARIFICATION OR IN THE NATURE OF
COMPLAINT?

A. WELL, ONE, WITHOUT SAYING COMPLAINT, WE ARE BOUND TO RESTATE WHAT OUR POSITION HAS BEEN ON THE WEST BANK, BUT, TWO, TO GET A FULL DESCRIPTION OF WHAT IS INTENDED AND WHAT IS BEING DONE.

Q. FROM THE FACT THAT YOU'RE GOING TO TAKE IT UP AFTER IT HAS BEEN ANNOUNCED, CAN WE ASSUME THEN THAT THE UNITED STATES WAS GIVEN NO ADVANCL WARNING OF THIS DECISION?
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A. I THINK THAT IS A FAIR ASSUMPTION.

Q. AND CAN YOU JUST REFRESH OUR COLLECTIVE MEMORY? MY RECOLLECTION IS THAT PRESIDENT CARTER DID SAY THAT HE DID TAKE UP WITH MR. BEGIN DURING THEIR MEETINGS THIS PRECISE SUBJECT, ALTHOUGH THEY NEGLECTED TO TAKE UP THE QUESTION OF LEGALIZATION?

A. THAT'S CORRECT.

Q. BUT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF FUTURE SETTLLMENTS WAS TAKEN UP DURING THE WHITE HOUSE MEETINGS AND THE PRESIDENT EXPRESSED HIS OPPOSITION TO IT?

A. THAT IS MY INTERPRETATION, I BELIEVE, OF THE DIRECT STATEMENT THE PRESIDENT MADE IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION AT HIS NEWS CONFERENCE.

Q. HAVE YOU CONSIDERED THESE SETTLEMENTS, HAS THE STATE DEPARTMEN, CONSIDERED THESE SETTLEMENTS, SINCE THEY HAVE BEEN ESTABLISHMENTS THERE WITH ISRAELI PEOPLE LIVING THERE FOR SOME TIME?

A. EXCUSE ME. I DON'T KNOW WHAT THAT QUESTION IS.

Q. YOU DON'T KNOW THE QUESTION OR YOU DON'T KNOW THE FACTS?

A. I'M ASKING YOU WHAT THE QUESTION IS.

Q. WELL, THE REPORT FROM ISRAEL IS THAT THESE A OUTPOSTS AND PEOPLE ARE LIVING IN THEM. THEY WERE LIVING
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IN THE SETTLEMENTS BEFORE. THE QUESTIONING HERE SEEMS TO LEVEL AT ISRAEL. WHY?

A. I DON'T KNOW. YOU'LL HAVE TO ASK THE QUESTIONERS.

Q. YOU'RE ANSWERING THEM. YOU'RE NOT QUESTIONIN6 THE

QUESTIONERS. THIS IS MY COMPLAINT.

A. THAT'S REALLY NOT MY FUNCTION.

Q. YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO PUT THE FACTS STRAIGHT AND YOU'RE NOT DOING IT.

A. NO. WHAT I'M SUPPOSED TO DO IS TRY TO REPLY TO QUESTIONS, AND I WILL TRY TO REPLY TO YOURS BY SAYING THAT AMONG THE THINGS WE ARE SEEKING TO DETERMINE, SINCE A NUMBER OF THINGS WERE SAID IN THAT STATEMENT, JOE, IS EXACTLY WHAT THESE SETTLEMENTS ARE, SINCE THERE WAS A SUGGESTION THAT THEY HAD SOME BACKGROUND IN DECISIONS MADE BY THE PREVIOUS GOVERNMENT AND A NUMBER OF OTHER THINGS.

Q. GOOD. I'M GLAD YOU'RE BRINGING THAT OUT. NOW, WHAT ABOUT THE OUTPOSTS, THAT FACTOR?

A. I HAVE NOTHING TO ADD TO WHAT I'M SAYING RIGHT NOW, THAT IS UNTIL WE TALK FURTHER TO THE ISRAEL GOVERNMENT.

Q. HAS AMBASSADOR LEWIS HAD TIME TO INFORM HIMSELF, INFORM THE STATE DEPARTMENT ABOUT THE PREVIOUS ISRAELI ACTION IN EXTENDING SOCIAL SERVICES, AND HAVE YOU GOT ANY REACTION TO THAT?

A. AGAIN, THE FULL REPORT OF THE AMBASSADOR'S DISCUSSION WITH THE ISRAELIS IS NOT IN HAND YET, AND AGAIN, WHEN WE HAVE IT, WE MAY HAVE A COMMENT TO OFFER.
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Q. DO YOU THINK YOU WILL HAVE ANYTHING TO SAY LATER TODAY, OR WILL THIS BE PUT OFF UNTIL TOMORROW?

A. I WOULD BE SURPRISED TODAY BECAUSE, AMONG OTHER THINGS, THE SECRETARY IS GOING TO BE OUT OF TOWN FOR A GOOD PART OF THE AFTERNOON AT CAMP DAVID, AND I DON'T

THINK THAT WE WILL BE SEEING ANYTHING, OBVIOUSLY, THAT THE SECRETARY HAS NOT SEEN HIMSELF.

Q. WILL THERE BE DIPLOMATIC EXCHANGES WITH THE ISRAELI EMBASSY HERE IN WASHINGTON?

A. I BELIEVE THE CONVERSATIONS ARE TAKING PLACE AT THE LEVEL OF OUR EMBASSY IN JERUSALEM WITH THE GOVERNMENT THERE.

A. COULD YOU EXPLAIN WHY IN BOTH OF THESE MATTERS YOU HAVE BEEN VERY CAREFUL TO POINT OUT THAT IT'S AMBASSADOR LEWIS AND THE GOVERNMENT THERE RATHER THAN

HERE? IS THERE ANY REASON FOR THAT?

A. I DON'T THINK THERE IS ANY SIGNIFICANCE TO IT. I THINK THAT THE AMBASSADOR SAT IN ON ALL OF OUR MEETINGS WHEN WE WERE THERE, AND I BELIEVE, AS OUR REPRESENTATIVE IN THAT COUNTRY, HE IS THE PROPER PERSON TO FIND OUT THE DETAILS FIRST-HAND FROM THE GOVERNMENT. I DON'T THINK IT SAYS ANYTHING ABOUT THE LEVEL OF OUR CONTACTS HERE.

Q. MAY I FOLLOW UP ON THE MIDDLE EAST? HAVE THERE BEEN ANY FURTHER CLARIFICATIONS FOR THE RECORD ON WHAT UNCLASSIFIED

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THE PLO MIGHT BE PREPARED OR NOT PREPARED TO DO WITH RESPECT TO RESOLUTION 242?

A. NO. NO, I DON'T HAVE ANYTHING FURTHER ON THAT. I THINK MARVIN OR SOMEONE ASKED ME ABOUT THAT YESTERDAY, AND WE HAVE NOTHING NEW AT THIS POINT. YOU HAVEN'T RAISED THE QUESTION, BUT I'D JUST AS SOON GET IT OUT, THAT THERE WAS SOME REPORT THAT THERE HAD BEEN SOME KIND OF COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE SECRETARY AND ARAFAT, AND THERE JUST HAS NOT BEEN ANY COMMUNICATION DIRECTLY BETWEEN THE TWO PEOPLE.

Q. INDIRECTLY?

A. I'M SORRY. EVERY TIME I SAY "DIRECTLY," I LEAD TO THAT QUESTION. THERE HAS NOT BEEN ANY COMMUNICATION THAT I KNOW OF, EXCEPT IN THE WAY THAT I HAVE DESCRIBED BEFORE, WHICH IS THAT WE MAKE OUR POSITION VERY CLEAR TO VARIOUS ARAB LEADERS, AND IT IS OUR UNDERSTANDING THAT THEY RELAY THAT TO MEMBERS OF THE PLO.

BUT I WANT TO GO BACK TO MY ORIGINAL ANSWER. WE DON'T

HAVE ANY NEW KIND OF INFORMATION AT ALL SINCE WE LEFT THE REGION THAT GOES TO THE QUESTION OF THE PLO'S STAND ON 242.

Q. IS YOUR POSITION ON A SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION THAT WOULD REPLACE OR AMPLIFY 242 THE SAME AS IT WAS YESTERDAY? THE REASON I ASK IS THAT AT AN ON-THE-RECORD BREAKFAST THIS MORNING ASSISTANT SECRETARY ATHERTON GAVE AN ANSWER WHICH SOUNDED SLIGHTLY MORE RECEPTIVE TO SUCH A RESOLUTION THAN YOURS.

A. I THINK IN THE ABSENCE OF SEEING EXACTLY WHAT

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HE SAID THAT I WOULD HAVE TO STAND ON THAT. I DON'T KNOW HOW THE QUESTION WAS FORMED OR PRECISELY HOW HE ANSWERED IT. I THINK I STAND ON WHAT I SAID YESTERDAY. I HAVE NOT HAD ANYBODY SUGGEST THAT THAT WAS NOT WHAT OUR POLICY IS, AND AT THIS POINT, I THINK THEY HAVE ALL READ IT.

Q. ON THE SECRETARY'S SCHEDULE THIS MORNING THERE WAS A MEETING WITH CONGRESSIONAL LEADERS REGARDING THE MIDDLE EAST?

A. YES.

Q. CAN YOU TELL US SOMETHING ABOUT WHO PARTICIPATED IN THAT?

A. I'D BE HAPPY TO GET YOU A LIST. I DON'T HAVE IT WITH ME. THIS IS PART OF OUR CONTINUING CONSULTATION WITH CONGRESS ON MAJOR FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES. AS TO WHO PARTICIPATED IN THE BREAKFAST, I'LL POST IT.

Q. WHAT ABOUT THESE REPORTS THAT PRESIDENT CARTER HAS SENT A MESSAGE OR A NOTE REGARDING SOUTHERN LEBANON TO ISRAEL AND SYRIA?

A. THE PRESIDENT DID SEND A NOTE TO PRESIDENT- YOU MEAN TO PRIME MINISTER BEGIN?

Q. YES.

A. I'M NOT PREPARED TO GO INTO THE SUBJECT OF WHAT WAS COVERED IN THAT NOTE. PERHAPS THE WHITE HOUSE WOULD, BUT I'M NOT AUTHORIZED TO DO THAT.
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Q. ON SOUTHERN LEBANON, IS IT STILL U.S. POSITION THAT

WHATEVER HAPPENS IN LEBANON SHOULD BE SETTLED WITHOUT INTERFERENCE FROM OUTSIDE PARTIES?

A. OUR POSITION IS CONSISTENT ON THAT.

Q. AND DOES THE STATE DEPARTMENT HAVE ANY CONFIRMATION OF MR. BEGIN'S STATEMENT THAT THE ISRAELIS HAVE BEEN

USING ARTILLERY AND HAVE BEEN SUPPLYING AMMUNITION TO THE CHRISTIAN FORCES?

A. WE HAVE NO REASON TO DOUBT WHAT THE PRIME MINISTER SAID.

Q. AND WHAT CONCLUSION DO YOU DRAW FROM THOSE TWO THINGS?

A. WELL, NO CONCLUSIONS AS SUCH. IT'S SIMPLY AS WE HAVE SAID BEFORE. OUR MAJOR ACTIVITIES IN THE AREA ARE AIMED AT ENDING THE FIGHTING, DISENGAGING THOSE WHO ARE ENGAGED IN IT; THAT THIS IS AN AREA IN WHICH THERE IS NOT MERELY ONE PARTY WHICH HAS BEEN ENGAGED IN THE COMBAT BUT A NUMBER; THAT IT'S A VERY COMPLEX SITUATION IN SOUTHERN LEBANON AND A VERY UNHAPPY ONE IN ALL OF LEBANON. AND WE HAVE AND ARE CONTINUING OUR EFFORTS TO BRING AN END TO THE FIGHTING IN A WAY THAT WOULD PRESERVE THE INTEGRITY OF LEBANON, SECURE ITS BORDERS, BRING AN END TO THE CONFLICT.

Q. IN OTHER WORDS, DO YOU THINK THAT THE ISRAELI PARTICIPATION IS HELPING IN THAT EFFORT TO END THE FIGHTING?

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A. I AM NOT PREPARED TO CHARACTERIZE EITHER ISRAELI OR ANY OTHER ACTIVITY, AND THERE ARE A NUMBER OF ACTORS IN THE SITUATION OF SOUTHRN LEBANON. I WOULD PREFER, AND INDEED MUST STAY WITH, WHAT I JUSSAID: WE HAVE A NUMBER OF PARTIES THAT WE HAVE WORKED WITH, TALKED TO, RELAYED INFORMATION FROM, AND WE'RE CONTINUING THAT EFFORT.

Q. WHAT IS THE STATUS OF THE POSSIBLE UN PEACEKEEPING FORCES IN SOUTHERN BANON?

A. I HAVE NOTHING NEW ON THAT SINCE OUR DISCUSSIONS IN THE MIDDLE EAST IN WHICH THE SUBJECT DID ARISE -- AS I THINK WE SAID SEVERAL TIMES -- AND I THINK TO REPEAT MYSELF FROM AN EARLIER BRIEFING, NOT HERE BUT ON THE TRIP, ULTIMATELY THAT'S A QUESTION WHICH THE LEBANESE

GOVERNMENT IS GOING TO HAVE TO ADDRESS AND SPEAK TO ITS OWN WISHES.

Q. IT'S NOT BEING PURSUED ELSEWHERE THEN?

A. I CAN'T ANSWER THAT CATEGORICALLY BECAUSE I DON'T KNOW. IT IS AN ACTIVE SUBJECT, OBVIOUSLY, IN THE AREA, BUT I DON'T KNOW OF ANYTHING GOING ON RIGHT NOW.

Q. WHAT ABOUT THE PRIME MINISTER'S STATEMENTS? I DON'T KNOW IF YOU EVER REACTED TO HIS PUBLIC CONFIRMATION THAT ISRAEL IS ACTIVELY INVOLVED MILITARILY IN SOUTHERN LEBANON.

A. NO. I THINK WHAT I JUST SAID WILL HAVE TO BE THE REACTION.
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Q. NO, BUT DID YOU THINK THAT STATEMENT -- THE PUBLIC ISRAELI CONFIRMATION -- WAS HELPFUL?

A. I'M REALLY NOT PREPARED TO CHARACTERIZE THOSE STATEMENTS AS BEING HELPFUL OR UNHELPFUL. I THINK THAT AS A GENERAL THESIS WHAT WE ARE CONCERNED WITH IS ENDING THE FIGHTING IN SUCH A WAY THAT AT THE END OF THAT YOU'D HAVE A LEBANON WHOSE BORDERS ARE SECURE AND WITHIN WHOSE BORDERS THERE IS PEACE AND IN WHICH THE INTEGRITY OF THE STATE OF LEBANON IS PRESERVED. THAT'S WHAT OUR EFFORTS ARE ABOUT. AND THOSE VIEWS ARE VERY CLEAR TO ALL THE PARTIES IN THE AREA.

Q. COULD I FOLLOW UP ON THIS LEBANON FIGHTING? IS ISRAEL USING U.S.-SUPPLIED EQUIPMENT OR MATERIEL IN SOUTHERN LEBANON? AND, IF SO, IS THAT A VIOLATION OF U.S. LAW?

A. I'D HAVE TO TAKE THAT ONE.

Q. THAT QUESTION WAS RAISED BY A SENATOR ABOUT TWO WEEKS AGO? DON'T WE HAVE AN ANSWER TO THAT YET?

A. AS I SAID, I'LL TAKE IT.

Q. I MAY BE INTERPRETING WHAT YOU'RE SAYING, BUT TELL ME IF I'M INTERPRETING IT WRONG. YOU ARE SAYING THAT WHAT ISRAEL IS DOING IN SOUTHERN LEBANON WOULD BE IN DIRECT CONFLICT WITH THE BASIC OUTLINE LAID DOWN BY THE UNITED STATES BUT YOU THINK THAT THERE ARE SUCH EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES THAT IT MAY BE CONSTRUCTIVE.

A. NO. I THINK WHAT I'M SAYING IS THAT I'M NOT REALLY PREPARED TO CHARACTERIZE THE ACTIVITIES OF ANY OF THE PARTIES AT THIS POINT IN SOUTHERN LEBANON AS TO SAY
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WHETHER THEY'RE CONSTRUCTIVE OR DESTRUCTIVE OR ANYTHING OF THE SORT.

I CAN ONLY REPEAT OUR POSITION ON WHAT WE BELIEVE IS THE PROPER OBJECTIVE THERE, AND I CAN'T GO BEYOND THAT.

Q. I'M JUST CURIOUS ABOUT ONE THING. AT THE END OF LAST MONTH, THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT LEGALIZED THREE

EXISTING SETTLEMENTS ON THE WEST BANK. ON THE BASIS OF A WIRE SERVICE STORY, THE STATE DEPARTMENT GOT IN TOUCH WITH THE ISRAELI EMBASSY AND THEN ISSUED A PUBLIC STATEMENT WHICH WAS STRONG AND CRITICAL OF THE ISRAELI ACTION. THERE HAVE BEEN TWO ISRAELI ACTIONS THIS PAST WEEK AFFECTING THE WEST BANK, AND YOU'RE GOING A DIFFERENT ROUTE ENTIRELY IN TERMS OF THE WAY YOU RESPOND PUBLICLY. NOW, IT IS THE AMBASSADOR IN ISRAEL WHO TALKS TO THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT.

IS THIS TO SUGGEST A JUDGMENT THAT THE FIRST TIME AROUND YOU FOLLOWED THE WRONG TACTICS, OR IS THIS TO SUGGEST WHAT EXACTLY?

A. IT IS TO SUGGEST THAT INSOFAR AS OUR POSITION ON THE WEST BANK IS CONCERNED, WE HAVE MADE IT EXTREMELY CLEAR THAT -- I HAVE JUST REPEATED -- THAT WE STAND BY THAT.

THAT TAKES IN A GREAT DEAL OF TERRITORY. TO SIMPLY READ THE SAME SCRIPT REPEATEDLY MIGHT BE OF INTEREST, BUT IT DOESN'T CHANGE THE FACT THAT THE SCRIPT HASN'T CHANGED -- I MEAN, WHETHER I DO OR DON'T READ IT -- AND WE ARE IN THE SAME POSTURE ON DEVELOPMENTS IN THE WEST BANK THAT WE WERE WHEN I GAVE THAT STATEMENT.

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Q. SINCE THERE IS A CONFLICT APPARENTLY IN THE INTERPRETATION OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT'S POSITION REGARDING SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 242 AS INDICATED HERE IN MY QUESTIONS, WOULD YOU UNDERTAKE A QUESTION THAT WILL MAKE CLEAR JUST EXACTLY WHERE THE UNITED STATES STANDS ON ANY RESOLUTION THAT MIGHT BE INTRODUCED IN THE SECURITY COUNCIL THAT WILL BE SEEN AS BEING IN ANY WAY TAMPERING THE USUAL WORD OF YESTERDAY WITH 242 OR 338?

A. I APPRECIATE THE SERIOUSNESS OF YOUR QUESTION, BUT I THOUGHT I REALLY WENT THROUGH THAT WHOLE THING YESTERDAY.

Q. BECAUSE OF THE CHANGE THAT WAS APPARENTLY MADE THIS MORNING BY THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE.

A. WHAT I'VE ALREADY SAID, I'M GOING TO DO -- WHICH IS TO SEE WHAT, IF ANY, CHANGE THERE WAS IN WHAT HE SAID.

I SERIOUSLY DOUBT THAT THERE IS A CHANGE IN POLICY, AND I WILL CHECK IT. AND IF IT TURNS OUT, I'VE ALREADY TAKEN THE QUESTION, I'M WILLING TO LOOK AT IT AND YOU WILL HAVE A FAIR SHOT AT ME TOMORROW.

Q. I WAS GOING TO ASK ABOUT THIS TERRORIST GROUP, THE PLO, SAYING IT HAS ACCEPTED THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR

BOMBING THE BUS IN ISRAEL. I WAS WONDERING WHETHER THE STATE DEPARTMENT HAS ANY REACTION TO THAT?

A. OUR POSITION ON ACTS OF TERRORISM IS WELL KNOWN. WE NEITHER CONDONE, ACCEPT OR IN ANY WAY BELIEVE THAT THERE IS ANY WAY TO ACCEPT ACTS OF TERRORISM.

INSOFAR AS WHOEVER IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THAT IS CONCERNED, WE OBVIOUSLY CONDEMN IT. THAT IS THE BEST I CAN DO.

Q. IN OTHER WORDS, YOU ARE CONDEMNING THE PLO FOR ITS UNCLASSIFIED

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ACTION?

A. IT MEANS WHOEVER IS RESPONSIBLE FOR IT. I DO NOT HAVE AN INDEPENDENT VERIFICATION OF WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR IT. I AM NOT PREPARED UNTIL I HAVE IT TO SAY THAT WE CONDEMN "X", "Y", OR "Z".

THERE ARE PRESS REPORTS ON A LOT OF ACTIVITIES IN WHICH SOMETIMES AS MANY AS FIVE DIFFERENT GROUPS WILL COME FORWARD EVENTUALLY TO TAKE CREDIT FOR IT.

Q. ARE YOU ASKING THE EMBASSY IN ISRAEL, OUR EMBASSY IN ISRAEL, TO FILE A REPORT AS TO WHO IS RESPONSIBLE AND ALSO ONE FROM BEIRUT TO SEE WHETHER OR NOT THE PLO STATEMENT IS AUTHENTIC AND, THEREFORE, TAKE UP ACTION ON THAT?

A. I AM SURE THAT WE ARE GOING TO HAVE AS FULL A REPORT AS IS POSSIBLE FOR OUR REPRESENTATIVES TO GIVE US ON IT.

Q. TO GO BACK TO THE WEST BANK, DID I UNDERSTAND YOUR PREVIOUS ANSWER TO SAY THE SCRIPT IS THE SAME? IS THAT

WHAT YOU SAID?

A. I STAND PRECISELY ON WHAT I SAID BEFORE ON THE QUESTION OF THE WEST BANK.

Q. WHICH IS THAT IF THERE ARE NEW SETTLEMENTS THEY REPRESENT AN OBSTACLE TO PEACE?

A. OUR POSITION, AS HAS BEEN STATED FROM HERE AND AS UNCLASSIFIED

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THE PRESIDENT HAS STATED IT, AS THE SECRETARY STATED IT, IT REMAINS UNCHANGED AND THERE ARE A NUMBER OF PHRASE-

OLOGIES THAT GO WITH IT AND I WILL BE GLAD TO GO BACK AND GET IT BACK OUT AND RE-READ IT.

Q. WOULD YOU SAY THAT THE BOMBINGS BY THE PLO TERRORISTS WAS AN OBSTACLE TO PEACE AS WELL?

A. I WOULD SAY THAT ACTS OF TERRORISM GENERALLY ARE OBSTACLES TO PEACE AND THE ABILITY OF PEOPLE TO LIVE TOGETHER IN HARMONY.

Q. WITH REFERENCE TO THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER TO PRIME MINISTER BEGIN, WE UNDERSTAND FROM INFORMATION RECEIVED HERE IN THE DEPARTMENT THAT THERE WAS A THREE PAGE LETTER WHICH SEEMED TO BE VERY FRIENDLY. CAN YOU GIVE US ANY FACTS AT ALL ON THIS?

A. NO.

Q. DOES THE UNITED STATES YET HAVE A POSITION ON WHETHER OR NOT SOMALIA FORCES ARE OR ARE NOT IN ETHIOPIA?

A. WE HAVE SEEN REPORTS THAT THOSE FORCES HAVE BEEN FIGHTING. WE NOTICE THAT TASS HAS MADE THAT ASSERTION AND SINCE THERE ARE RUSSIAN ADVISORS ASSISTING SOMALIA WE EXPECT THAT THEY PROBABLY HAVE FAIRLY GOOD INFORMATION.

Q. DOES THAT AFFECT OUR WILLINGNESS IN PRINCIPLE TO SELL WEAPONS TO SOMALIA?

A. I THINK WE MADE IT FAIRLY CLEAR THAT AT FIRST WE INTENDED ANY WEAPONS THAT WERE GOING TO GO TO SOMALIA TO BE USED FOR THEIR LEGITIMATE INTERNAL DEFENSIVE NEEDS. SECOND, THAT SINCE THE OUTBREAK OF THIS FIGHTING AND UNCLASSIFIED

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OUR EXPRESSED INTEREST IN SEEING IT BROUGHT TO AN END, THAT WE ARE AT THIS POINT SIMPLY NOT YET PREPARED TO ANNOUNCE WHEN WE WOULD EFFECT THIS AGREEMENT IN

PRINCIPLE TO SUPPLY WEAPONS TO SOMALIA. WE WOULD NOT WISH TO DO SO AT A TIME OR IN A MANNER WHICH MIGHT CONTRIBUTE TO THE CONFLICT IN OGADEN. SO, WE HAVE NO INTENTION OF BEING INVOLVED ON ONE SIDE OR THE OTHER OF THAT CONFLICT.

Q. CAN WE ASSUME THAT AT THE MEETING THAT IS TAKING PLACE OR WILL BE TAKING PLACE BETWEEN AMBASSADOR LEWIS AND THE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT, WHOEVER HE MEETS WITH, WILL HE BE FILING A PROTEST OR COMPLAINT OR WILL HE BE EXPRESSING DEEP DISAPPOINTMENT OR HOW WOULD YOU CHARACTERIZE HIS REACTION.

A. I AM NOT REALLY PREPARED TO CHARACTERIZE IT EXCEPT TO SAY THAT HE WILL CLEARLY RE-STATE OUR POSITION ON THE SUBJECT.

AGAIN, I WOULD RATHER WAIT FOR HIS REPORT BEFORE I TRY TO GO INTO PRECISELY WHAT WAS SAID OR TO THE DEGREE THAT I WILL BE ABLE TO DO IT EVEN THEN. I MAY HAVE MORE FOR YOU ON THIS TOMORROW.

2. QUESTION TAKEN AT TODAY'S BRIEFING:

Q. WHAT DID MR. ATHERTON SAY AT BREAKFAST TODAY? DOES OUR POLICY REMAIN UNCHANGED ON RESOLUTION 242?

A. MR. ATHERTON SAID THAT THE U.S. FULLY SUPPORTS RESOLUTION 242 AND THAT WE WOULD OPPOSE EFFORTS TO UNCLASSIFIED

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AMEND OR OTHERWISE CHANGE IT, OR THAT WOULD BE CONTRARY TO THE PURPOSE OF RESOLUTION 242. HIS COMMENTS THEREFORE REPRESENT NO CHANGE IN THE U.S. POSITION.

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Message Attributes

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Subject: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING - AUGUST 17 1. FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS FROM DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING FOR AUGUST 17, 1977. FYI ONLY, SPOKESMAN TODAY WAS HODDING CARTER III.
TAGS: PFOR, SOPN, IS, XF, LE, US, SO
To: TEL AVIV NIACT AMMAN MULTIPLE
Type: TE
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Review Markings:
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